

Provo to Mark 122nd Anniversary

By N.L. CHRISTENSEN

Provo will have a birthday Saturday — it's 122nd.

It was on April 1, 1849 that the first colony of pioneer settlers arrived on the banks of the Timpanogos (Provo) River after traveling from Salt Lake City.

The settlers spent the next day crossing the river, looking over the area, and choosing the spot for a fort.

Then, on April 3, they began to build the log homes and enclosure known as "Fort Utah" south of the river and somewhere in the vicinity of the present Geneva Road.

Date Established

An entry in the LDS Church Historical Record specifically mentions April 3 as the date construction of the fort began. Records indicate it required about six weeks to complete the fort.

Later a 30-foot-square bastion was erected on a natural mound in the fort, of heavy posts. A six-pounder iron cannon was placed on the platform which was sufficiently elevated to protect the fort and stockyards from attack by the Indians.

(After one year the Mormon settlers moved the fort, because of the wetness of the original location to higher ground at the site of the present North (Sowiette) Park.)

Designation of April 3 as date to be celebrated as Provo's official birthday was made by the Provo City Commission in an ordinance passed March 19, 1969.

The action came after an in-depth study by a special com-

mittee of Provo historians appointed by the city to research into the subject and determine the date when the settlement was made here.

The study was undertaken after preliminary research by the Herald had shown that March 12, the date observed for many years as the city's birthday, could not be correct.

No commemoration for the public of the 122nd anniversary has been announced for Saturday. However, a "birthday dinner and program" is being

held by the Sons and Daughters of the Utah Pioneers of Provo for Friday in observance of the anniversary.

Interest in organizing a settlement in Utah Valley had been shown by President Brigham Young and other church leaders from the time the Mormons first arrived in Salt Lake Valley in July of 1847. A number of survey parties were dispatched into the region during the next two years.

Church records show that at a "council meeting" at the home

of Heber C. Kimball March 10, 1849 "it was voted that a colony of 30 men settle in Utah Valley this spring for the purpose of farming and fishing and of instructing the Indians in cultivating the earth and of teaching them civilization..."

Higbee Chosen

On March 13 at a meeting in President Young's office, John S. Higbee was chosen president and bishop of the "Provo Branch" of the church to lead the colony to the valley.

At still another meeting,

March 17, names of 33 men "who were going to settle in Utah Valley" were read at a council meeting in Salt Lake.

The journals of George W. Bean, member of the original party to settle here, have been instrumental in establishing April 1 as the date of arrival on the banks of the Provo River.

Harry Dees, a librarian at Brigham Young University, now doing research for a doctorate dissertation on Mr. Bean, submitted the following to the

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FORT UTAH on the Timpanogos (Provo) River as pictured in Capt. Howard Stansbury's "Exploration and Survey of the Valley of the Great Salt Lake of Utah" published in 1852. This sketch of the original Fort Utah of 1849, which was located

near the present Geneva Road south of Provo River, was made by Allen Faye, artist accompanying Stansbury, an army officer conducting official surveys for the government. Faye also sketched the illustration appearing on Page 2.

...and ARVN Regiment, a
battalion of 106 mm howitzers,
U.S. advisers and a U.S.
chemical sniffer outfit. The
Communists opened up at 6
a.m. Wednesday with a barrage
of 122 mm rocket and 75 mm
recoilless rifle fire and stormed
the base.

The South Vietnamese re-
moved the sights and breech
bolts from their howitzers and
fired, U.S. military sources said.

American helicopters were
sent to rescue the fleeing
soldiers and at least 60 South
Vietnamese and nine Ameri-
cans were picked up. But two
UH1 Huey helicopters were shot
down.

Military sources said 80 of
the North Vietnamese Army's
8th Regiment were killed. This
was the same unit which
attacked the Ben Het Special
forces camp in the same area
two years ago to launch a
major Communist offensive in
the South.

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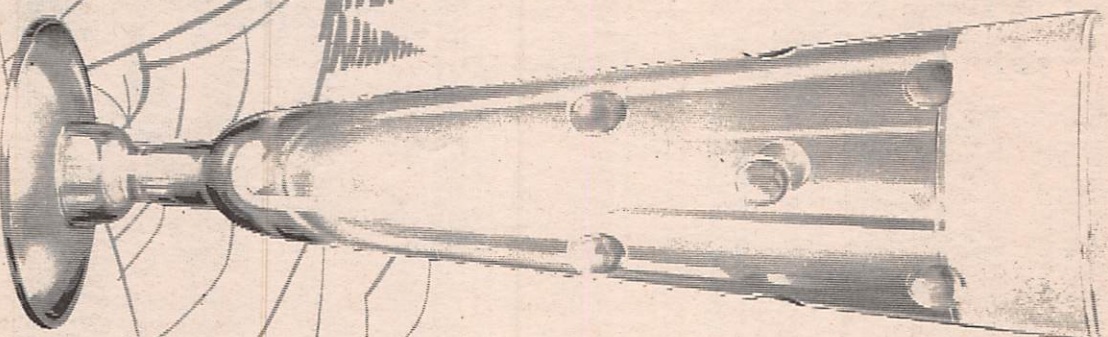
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